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ABSTRACT

Intended to be used by groups of young people under the supervision of adults, this workbook is for young people who want to learn about public affairs and to become involved in their communities. There are exercises that may be completed independently by each person, and exercises that may be used by the entire group. The guide can be used by youth organizations, school groups, community groups, congregation-based groups, culturally-based groups, and any other group of young people who want to develop their public lives. Five chapters of the workbook correspond to five steps leading to citizen action: (1) Discovering Your Self-Interest"; (2) "Stepping into Public Life"; (3) "Encountering Diversity"; (4) "Building Power"; and (5) "Go for It!" Each step is divided into stories, lessons, and exercises. The workbook's resources include tips for aiding group discussions, guidelines for adults working with groups of young people, guidelines for evaluating group work, and lists of useful organizations, materials, and further reading. (DB)

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Making the Rules

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A guidebook for young people who intend to make a difference.

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About this book

Making the Rules was written for teams of young people who want to make changes in their communities. It began as a document from the Twin Cities 1989 Youth and Democracy Conference and has expanded to include the ideas and themes from discussions with over 1,000 young people from across the country. *Making the Rules* has since been used by teams of young people as a starting place for their own community action. It has been reviewed by young people, and grown as our work has grown.

As you use this guidebook, think about what you like about it, what you'd like more of, what's missing, and ways to make what's here more useful to young people. We'd like to hear from you.

Making the Rules, this second edition, happened because of:

writing by:	Peg Michels, Suzanne Paul and Harry C. Boyte
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About Project Public Life

Making the Rules is a publication of Project Public Life. Project Public Life teaches a new kind of politics in which citizens are powerful actors in public problem-solving: Citizen politics.

- Citizen politics has a big picture of politics, one that includes public life—an active, diverse, challenging arena in which we act on what matters to us;

- Citizen politics teaches citizens how to build their power, because it teaches them how to act effectively;

- Citizen politics is collaborative. It needs diverse voices and experiences to work.

Based at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, Project Public Life is funded in part by a three-year grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. For more information, contact

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About Public Achievement

Many of the concepts and exercises in this guidebook have been tested by young people on Public Achievement teams. Public Achievement is a hands-on program of Project Public Life that brings citizen politics alive through teams of teenagers. Working with coaches from community organizations and local college campuses, young people select a public problem relevant to their community. They design and implement strategies to address their community's issues and present their work at city-wide youth conferences and trainings.

A pilot project for a national program on politics and youth, Public Achievement is a collaborative effort among many community organizations, Project Public Life, and Mayor Jim Scheibel in St. Paul, Minn. If you would like to learn more about starting a Public Achievement program in your community, contact Project Public Life.

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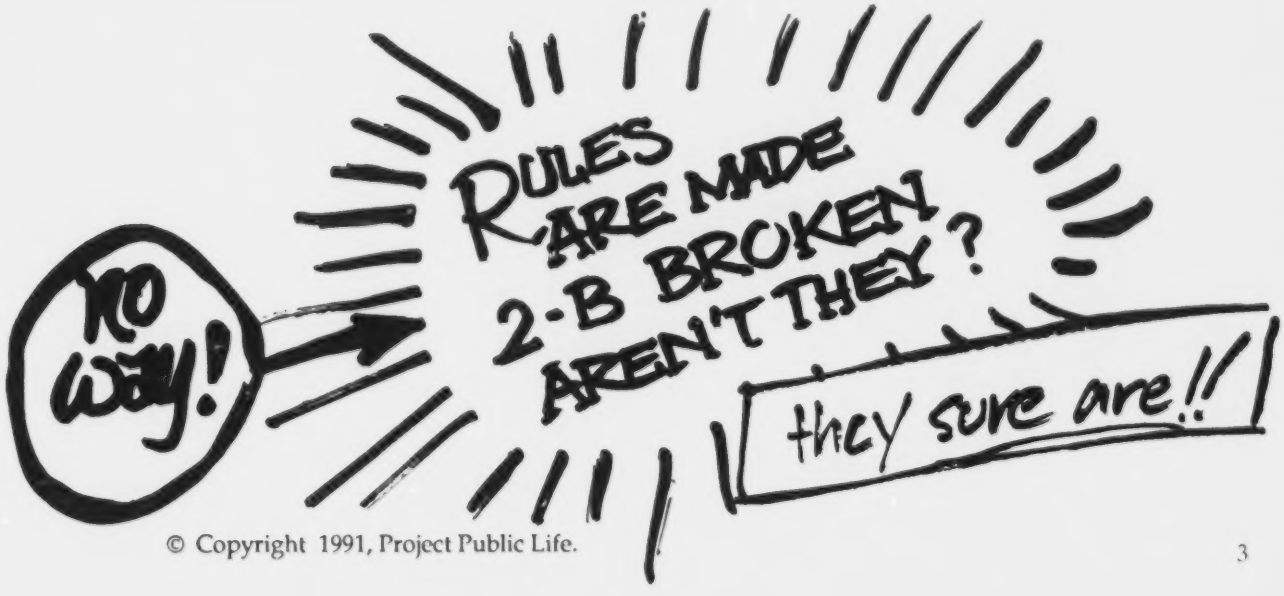

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Contents

Introduction: **How to use this work book**....8

The Framework: **What is Politics?**....10

Step One: **Discovering Your Self-Interest**....13
- The story: Looking for Self in a Foreign Land....14
- The lessons: Uncovering Your Identity....15
  - Telling Yours: Tips from storytellers....17
- The exercises:
  - Time Line....19
  - Questions about your Time Line....20
  - Storytelling from your Time Line....21
  - A New Dictionary....22
  - History Mystery Tour....23
- Wrap-Up: Looking Back on Your Work....24

Step Two: **Stepping into Public Life**....25
- The story: Aitken comes to the Twin Cities....26
- The lesson: Telling Public Life from Private Life....27
- The exercises:
  - Why School?....29
  - Public or Private People?....30
  - What's in a Name?....31
  - Telling Ideas from Feelings....32
- Wrap-Up: Looking Back on Your Work....33

Step Three: **Encountering Diversity**....35
- The story: Using the Differences....36
- The lesson: Seeing Other People's Self-Interest....37
- The exercises:
  - Getting It Right....38
  - The Un-Common Denominator....39
  - Five Things You Are....40
  - When Diversity Hurts....41
- Wrap-Up: Looking Back on Your Work....42

Step Four: **Building Power**....43
- The story: Skateboarding in Marshall....44
- The lessons: Getting Familiar with Power....45
  - Advice on Building Collaborative Power....46
  - Teaching New "Rules" in School....47
- The exercises:
  - Is School a Separate World?....48
  - The Seventy-Five Cents Solution....49
  - Mapping Power....50
- Wrap-Up: Looking Back on Your Work....51

Step Five: **Go For It!**....53
- Citizen Politics: The Big Picture of how it all fits together....54
- Do-It-Yourself Politics....55
- Your Story....56

Resource A: **Fighting For our Lives—**
song by Larry Long and participants of the 1989 Youth and Democracy Conference....58

Resource B: **Guidelines for Coaches**....60

Resource C: **Using a Reporter**....61

Resource D: **Tips for Evaluation**....62

Resource E: **Glossary**....63

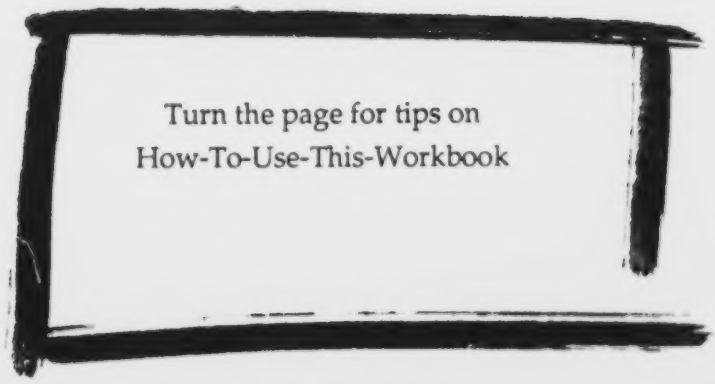
Resource F: **When You've Run Out of Pages:**
More Avenues to Explore....65

Comments: **Tell Us What You Think**....69

life is what you make it

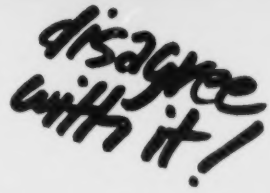
POLITICS = POWER

Introduction



7

How to use this workbook



This book is like a tool kit that can be used to build your public life. It is meant to be worked on by groups of young people with adults. There are exercises that may be completed independently by each person, and exercises that may be used by the entire group. This group can be made up of people who already know one another...or not. Maybe the group has already begun to enter public life through youth community projects...maybe not.

This workbook can be used in a single weekend session, or over the course of several weeks by:

- Δ youth organizations
- Δ school groups
- Δ community groups
- Δ congregation-based groups
- Δ culturally-based groups
- Δ almost any collection of young people who want to develop their public lives.

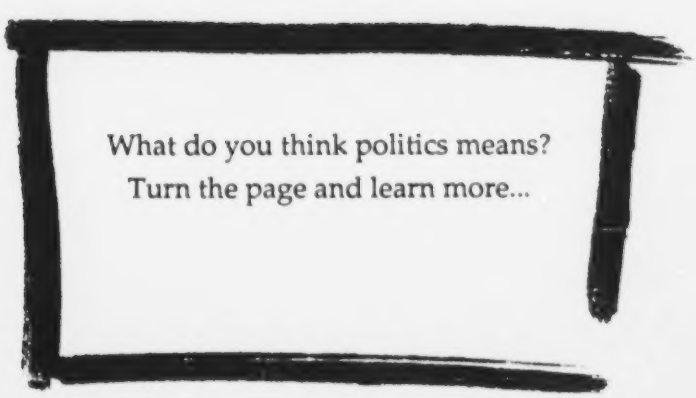
The framework of the book is citizen politics. Each chapter (or Step) is based on a key component of citizen politics: self-interest, public, diversity, power. Each step is divided into stories, lessons and exercises.

The resources at the back include tips for facilitating group discussions, guidelines for adults working with groups of young people, tips for evaluating group work, and lists of useful organizations, materials, and further reading.

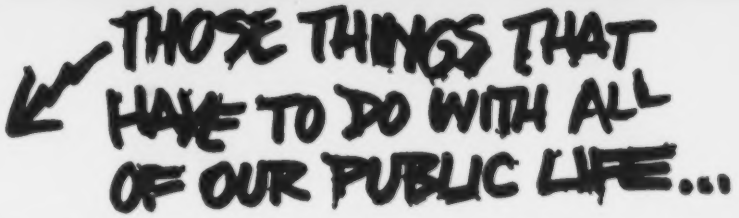
This workbook is meant to be used, changed, added to, and argued with. It is an outline for citizen action. Nothing will happen unless you try it, change it and get involved. Good luck!

★ United Artists against Police Brutality★

The Framework



What is politics?



When they hear the word "politics" these days, a lot of people get angry. Politics makes people think of corruption, backroom deals, or negative ads on t.v. Politics is something that other people (experts, politicians, lobbyists) do—or worse, do *to* us.

Thinking about politics like this can make us cynical. As one student put it, "I have an argument in my head between cynicism--'nothing can be done, it's hopeless'--and what I really feel: 'I've got to do something about the problems I see.'" Another said, "Community is like a hotel now; people don't know each other.'"

But politics *used to* mean something else. The word meant activity "of the citizen"--that is, by ordinary people. Politics was the way that communities made decisions and made the rules that people lived by. "Citizenship" wasn't a boring duty, and it didn't mean just voting. It meant the chance to make a difference. Andpeople understood that it was something they needed to learn--like playing basketball or making music with a band--people can do it well or not so well.

Today, young people and adults are beginning to do something about important issues in their communities, like drugs, the need for places to have fun, improving schools, protecting the environment, and fighting poverty and homelessness.

They have decided to make a difference and be heard. And they have begun to understand again what politics means: ordinary people--not experts or political professionals by themselves--possess the wisdom and imagination that is necessary to solve major problems. Wisdom and imagination come from people working together. This is called citizen politics.

At conferences in the spring of 1989 and 1990, people in this youth movement gathered in Minneapolis to talk about what they've been doing and how these actions might help get us back to a better kind of politics. The song at the back of this book (see Resource A) describes their hopes and ideas.

They told the stories of what they've been doing. Storytelling is an old art, but it is a very important way of learning, too. We learn from telling our own stories. We can learn from hearing the stories of others. People at the conferences also talked about several key organizing ideas. Young people across the country have found these helpful as they act to make a difference. These are the ideas:

• **Self-Interest:** Everybody has their own story, values, dreams, concerns, interests. These are who you are--your *self* --and the things you care about. They're things that matter so much to you that they become the reason you step into public life.

• **Public Life:** As you enter the public life of the community, you see how it's different from private life. You realize--sometimes the hard way--that you can't expect the same things from acquaintances and strangers that you expect from friends and family. You also might learn that you havedifferent things to offer. You learn how to do politics in public life.

• **Diversity:** Out in public, you find people who are not like you--people of different backgrounds, cultures, histories, religions, races, regions, skills and perspectives. You remain the same person, but as you encounter diversity, your understanding of how you "fit in" can also change and grow from making new contacts.

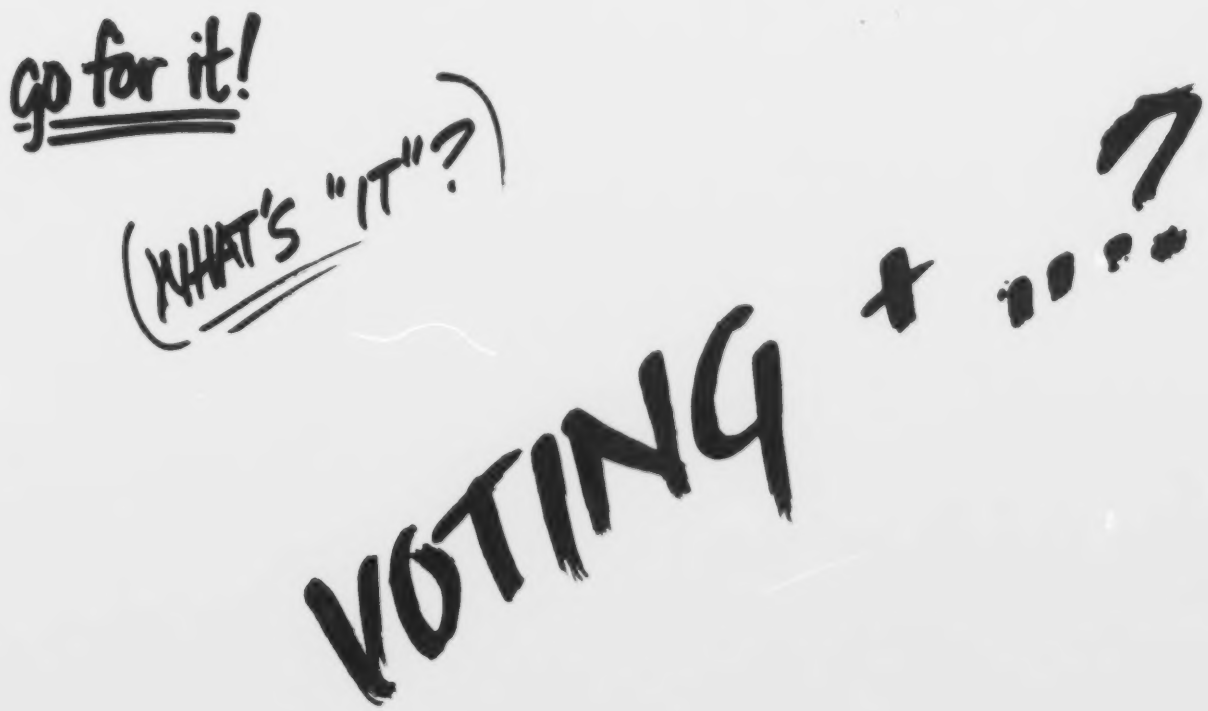
• **Power:** Power is the ability to act and make a difference. And acting on what matters to you is what public life is all about. Learning to work with other people, even if they aren't necessarily like you, is essential to using power.

• **Go for it!** Doing public life well is like learning to play basketball or to dance. It takes practice to know who you are, to deal with diversity, and to act together with other people.

These are the key ideas of this guidebook. We hope they will help you become involved and effective in making your communities better places to live.

Hold it!
Does this match your idea of politics?

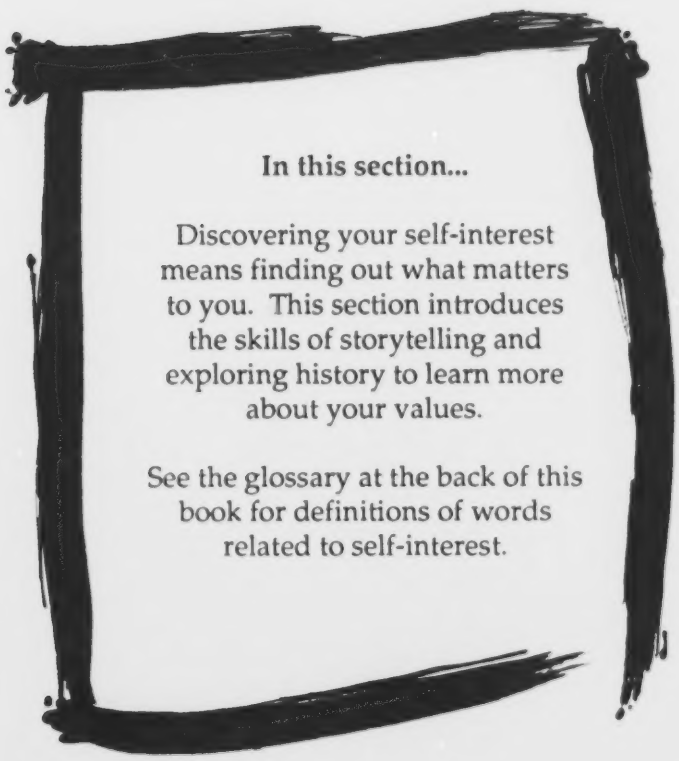
What do you think politics *should* be?



11

Step One:
Discovering Your

Self-Interest



In this section...

Discovering your self-interest means finding out what matters to you. This section introduces the skills of storytelling and exploring history to learn more about your values.

See the glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to self-interest.

STEP ONE: Discovering your Self-Interest

The Story: Looking for Self in a Foreign Land

For Cambodian young people who have fled the war in their country and have come to the U.S., it's hard enough to be a newcomer. It's hard enough to learn English. It's hard enough to have lived through the war. On top of it all, it's hard just to be a teenager, sometimes alone in a strange country.

"They suffer from depression and stress," explained Born Chea, who himself arrived in the United States in 1984 speaking no English.

Chea was separated from his family at age eight, so he knows what isolation is like. But Chea quickly absorbed American culture from his adoptive parents, and now he attends Inver Hills Community College and works part time as a waiter.

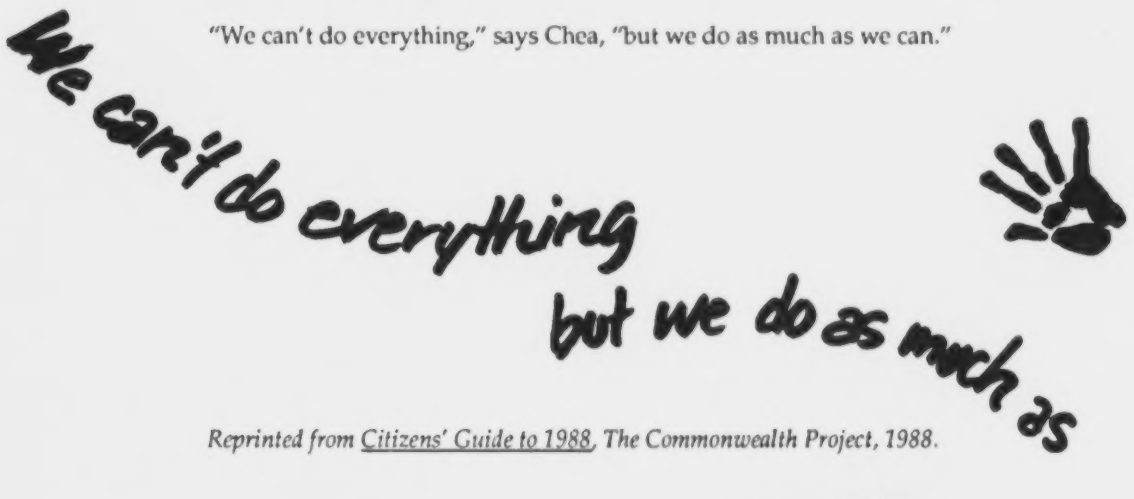
In 1985, Chea and several other Cambodians attended a camp sponsored by the National Youth Leadership Council, where they learned about youth leadership and how young people can contribute in their communites.

Excited by the experience, they decided to pass on to their peers what they had learned. So they secured funding for their idea of a summer camp for Cambodian young people between 12 and 21 years old. They got the names of Cambodian young people in the Twin Cites area from Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services, which run shelters for refugees.

About 60 young people attended in 1987. They learned in both English and in the Cambodian languages how American and traditional Cambodian cultures compare, and how culture contributes to the broader community. Now the project has received further support from dozens of organizations and individuals, as well as the metro-area Southeast Asian community.

Young people who attended the camp have already begun to affect their community, Chea says, by reaching out to elderly Cambodians and by joining groups to preserve Khmer culture.

"We can't do everything," says Chea, "but we do as much as we can."



Reprinted from Citizens' Guide to 1988, The Commonwealth Project, 1988.

Uncovering Your Identity

Who are you? What is important to you? When they came to the United States, Born Chea and his Cambodian friends were forced by circumstances to explore their values, concerns, feelings, and ideas. In order to discover ways to be part of this very different culture, Chea and his friends learned to claim their own identity and determine what mattered to them. Understanding who you are, what motivates you and how others are connected to you is called self-interest.

Self-interest is not selfish or private. In fact, the word "interest" comes from the Latin phrase meaning "to be among." Self-interest always has to do with what you're working for in a group of people. Citizen politics is built by each person working for what they believe. But first, each person has to figure out what that is.

Do you know who you are? Some people imagine their identity to be like a suitcase. They believe that you are born empty and unconnected. And as you go from place to place on your way to adulthood, the suitcase gets filled with things. When the suitcase is full, you have become who you are--yourself.

What are the problems with this image of identity?

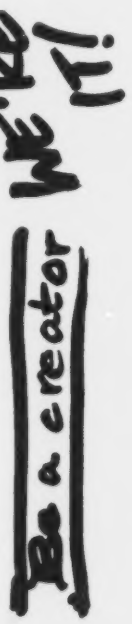
Identity as a suitcase has no roots, no ties. It can be filled with things that you buy or acquire. It can be easily misplaced, shed or discarded for a new one. But in fact, identity is not what you wear or buy. Things may be part of your life, but things do not make up identity. You cannot buy your "self."

Instead of viewing identity as a suitcase, what if you imagined identity as a tree? A tree is rooted deep in the soil. Your identity is rooted in your past, in the lives of your family, community, and culture. These roots–this personal story–give you the strength and nourishment to continually grow. As the trunk of a tree connects roots to branches, identity is connected to both your past and your future. And like the branches of a tree, you are always reaching out, growing, and connecting in public ways.

Knowing who you are will take a lifetime of discovery. Self-interest, like a tree, grows, changes, and is constantly transformed by the outside world. Discovering who you are and how you relate to others can be exciting, joyful, painful, and difficult. We all have stories about ourselves that help to explain why we are who we are. Learning and telling your own story is a powerful way to understand what motivates you and what's most important to you. You enter public life based on what you care about— and learning your own story is a way to find out what you care about most.

As you'll see in the section, *Stepping into Public Life,* by listening to other people's stories you encounter images, memories and experiences that can remind you about who you are. Some people may have stories that are similar to yours in some ways. When we hear stories that are different from ours, we learn about a different past and different memories. They also suggest different futures.

But other stories can help you understand yourself, too. You partly know who you are by knowing who you're not — and in important ways, you can never be anybody but yourself. Learning who you are by learning to tell your unique story is the first step toward working in the public arena.



I DON'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF LIFE -
IT TAKES ADVANTAGE OF ME
BUT YOU'RE LIFE!!!
PUNKS
B + KNOWING + THYSELF
No -
It's knowing what you're supposed to do
according to who?

Wait a Minute!

Do you agree with what you just read?

Is there anything you didn't understand?

Are there parts of it that don't apply to you? Are there parts that particularly do? Why?

Politics is...self-expression

Telling Yours: Tips from Storytellers

You might not think of yourself as a storyteller. Maybe you think you don't have enough creativity or imagination, or you're too shy, or you lead an unexciting life. Unfortunately, television sometimes reinforces these feelings by showing us people and stories that are polished and well-rehearsed.

But the fact is, we already tell stories in our daily conversations, and we each have an "audience" that we feel comfortable with: our closest friends, cousins, or kid brothers and sisters. And television's stories aren't half as important as ours. By storytelling, we mean describing scenes in our lives that can give others clues about who we are. The process of telling others about what we've done and what we know is important, because through it we come to understand ourselves.

Although we all can and do tell stories every day, there are some skills that can make our personal stories more meaningful to other people. Two people with these skills are Elaine Wynne and Larry Johnson, from the Key of See, an organization of professional storytellers and teachers of their trade. Here are some of their tips for telling stories in a group setting.

Follow the "Four F's"

Find a story. Coming up with a "kernel"--an idea for a story-- is the hardest part for people who feel that "nothing happens in my life." Often the beginnings of a story is just a fragment or situation you remember. Listen to the stories of others--sometimes this reminds you of a story you have. It helps if the group selects a particular topic to tell stories about.

Form the story. Shape the different parts of the story so they make sense. Give your story a beginning (where you give a little background), a middle (usually where you describe some kind of challenge or conflict), and an end (where you say how the challenge or conflict got handled).

Fight Fear. Nervousness is good—it shows that what you're doing is important. But if you're too fearful to tell a story, your ego is probably telling you that you're "in danger" of imperfection. Concentrate on the story that wants to come out, not on yourself telling it. Remember that when you're drawing on your own life, there is no wrong answer, and there are no bad stories.

Use the "Glop Method"

Make a series of round blobs on a sheet of paper. Inside each one, put a phrase or drawing to represent different parts of the story. These cues help you remember to include important pieces of the story without actually writing a script: written versions can trap you into one particular way of telling a story. Switch the blobs around or add more as you think of better ways to tell the story.

List Possible Stories

Keep a small notebook or a card file with outlines of stories you might want to tell. Jot ideas down in the notebook whenever you think of one.

Picture Yourself in a Comfortable Place

Some people find it easier to think up and tell a story if they imagine themselves with friends in their kitchen at home, or sitting on your bed at night. If this takes away some of your shyness, do it!

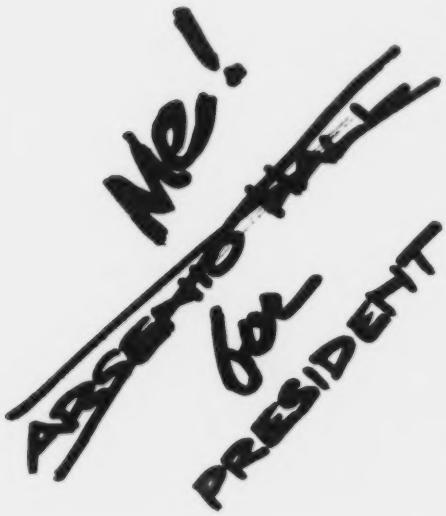
Have People Listen
It's good for your story to have people listen to you tell it, not just once, but through a few versions. Listeners notice things that will help you communicate more with your story. "What happened to that other guy?" and "I don't get the part about the car accident" are comments that can help you make your story better. (Besides, that's what a story is for!)

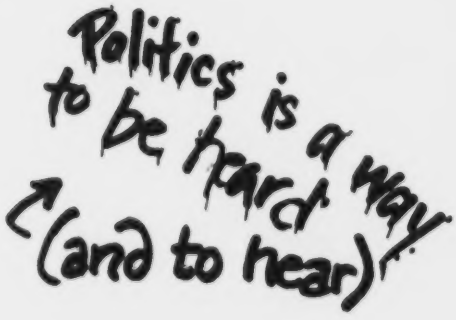
Listen To Others
You can learn a lot about what makes a story interesting by listening to other people tell theirs. The infinite variety of stories you hear should reassure you that nobody can judge your story, because it's one-of-a-kind.

A Few Ideas for Story Topics:

- the most frightening thing that ever happened to me;
- the most unusual person I ever met;
- somebody who made me laugh;
- the person I will never forgive;
- my most memorable holiday;
- a time when I was angry;
- a time when I was successful.

It takes practice to tell your public story. The next several exercises will start you on your way!





Exercises

"Discovering your Self-Interest"

Time Line
Questions about your Time Line
Storytelling from your Time Line
A New Dictionary
History Mystery Tour

Time Line

This exercise asks you:

To see whether and how your personal history has affected what you believe. What you know about your private life that will help you understand what you do in public life. Use your neighbors and family to discover other things about your life.

It relates to citizen politics because:

We carry our private lives into public in the form of self-interest. We must understand our self-interest before we can act on it.

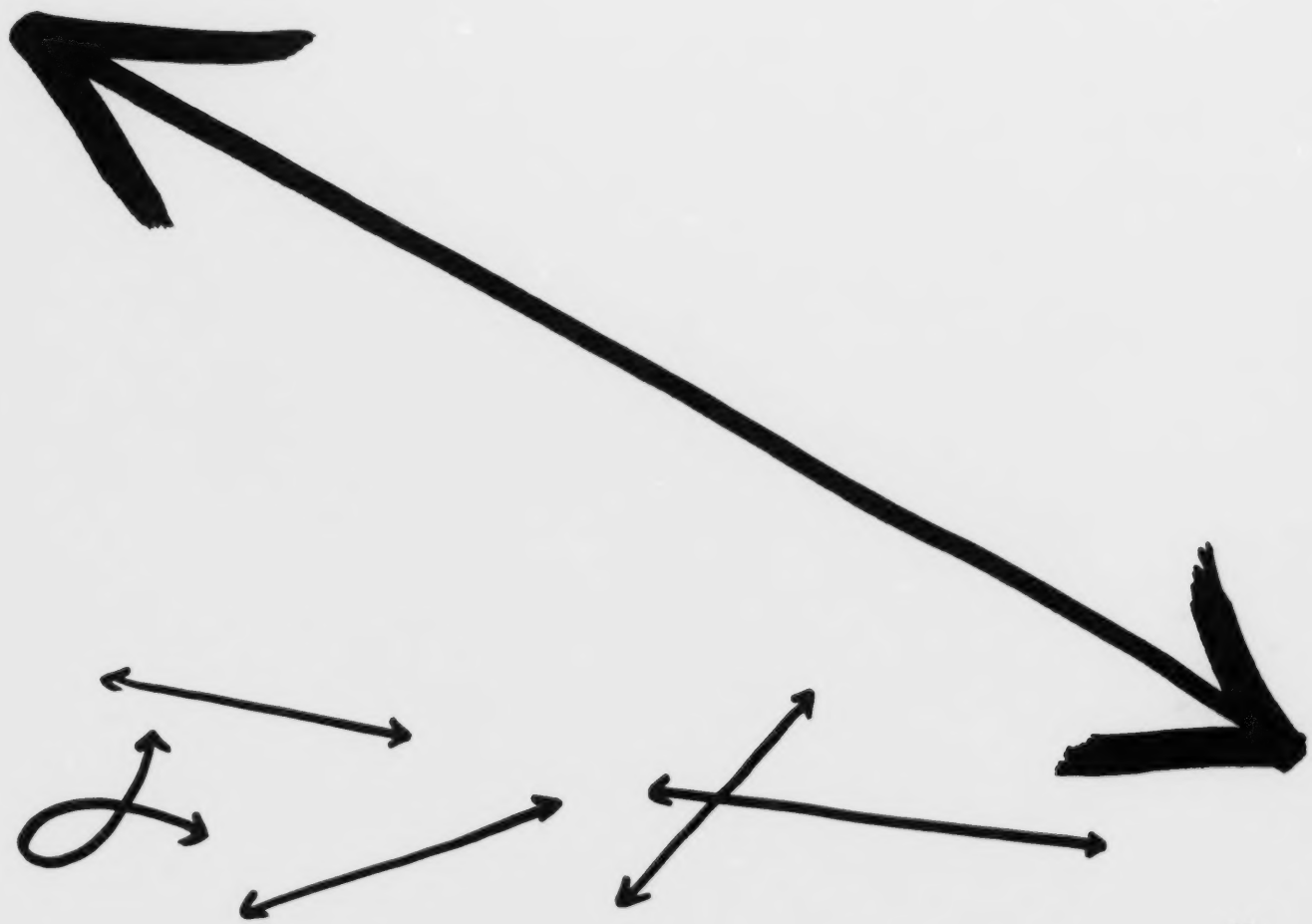
Instructions:

Mark important events in your life on the "time line". Start anywhere you want to and use your own rules to decide what kinds of things to include.

If you have time, find out more about your identity by asking your parents, grandparents and long-time neighbors for details about your past.

Time limits:

Individuals: 30 minutes



19

Questions about your Time Line

This exercise asks you:
To draw from and use the "Time Line" as you create your own story.

It relates to citizen politics because:
Taking time out to look at the value of what we do is how we learn from our experiences. Also, listening to how others respond differently to the same question shows us how important it is to identify our own beliefs.

Instructions:
Look back at your time line (previous page) and write down answers to the questions below.

Time limits
Individuals: 10 minutes
Group discussion: 15 minutes

Does knowing your family's history help you know yourself?

Do you have brothers and sisters who showed up on the time line? Where do you come in your family (oldest, youngest girl, etc)? Do you think that made a difference in whether you showed your brothers and sisters?

Did you go back 10 years? 5 months? 2 weeks? How would your time line change depending on how much time it covered?

Is your timeline empty or full? Explain why.

Is there a place on the timeline when private events cross into public experience?

Was doing the timeline useful? Did it show you anything new?

20

Storytelling from your Time Line

This exercise asks you:
To put your time line into a shape that's more like a story, so that it makes sense to others.

It relates to citizen politics because:
Describing our self-interest to others helps us define it better to ourselves. Storytelling is a path of communication that allows us to understand one another's points of view.

Instructions:
Choose an important event from your Time Line. Choose one that taught you something about yourself.

Refer back to the page, "Telling Yours: Tips from Storytellers". Using the "glop method", make a series of drawings or phrases that would help you talk about this important event. The event can be funny, sad, embarrassing or something you're proud of. In addition to remembering how the event happened, try to think how the event shaped the point of view you have today.

Tell your story to the group.

Time limits:
Individuals:	30 minutes
Read to the group:	15 minutes

Tips for Coaches/Group Facilitators
- Have people sit in a circle;

- Make sure that everybody understands that it's okay to "pass" and not tell a story;

- Set a 15-minute limit on stories. Short stories are fine. If they're very short, encourage the short-story-tellers to tell two;

- Consider using a "talking staff", an object that gets passed around and allows only the person holding it to tell a story.

A New Dictionary

This exercise asks you:
To think about what some important words mean to *you*, based on your background.

It relates to citizen politics because:
Like politics, language belongs to those who use it — not just the "experts". Most dictionaries try to give words meanings that everyone can accept, without any personal interpretations. This is an exercise in putting self-interest back into the words we use.

Instructions:
Without looking at an official dictionary, give the words listed below definitions. Also, think about how these words relate to your community work.

Time limits
Individuals first: 20 minutes
Whole group, afterward: 20 minutes

anger
conflict
diversity
evaluation
imagination
interviewing
listening
negotiation
maturity
politics
power
public
private
self-interest
storytelling
judgment

Are there other words you think need new definitions?

Some of these words are defined by Project Public Life—see Resource D.

History Mystery Tour

This exercise asks you:
To develop awareness and respect for the details that made and make a community what it is.

It relates to citizen politics because:
Pride and interest in their community are what cause many people to enter public life. If people feel like they know and belong to their community, they are more likely to work for it. Identity is often closely tied to one's communities.

Instructions:
Visit a cemetery — the older, the better. Notice what it says about the surrounding community. How old is the oldest gravestone? When did diseases sweep through? How big were families? What languages are the names from? Which families have the fanciest gravestones? If the cemetery you find is run down, consider "adopting" it. Make regular visits to care for the grounds and un-do any vandalism. Find out where *your* relatives are buried.

Or: Visit a local monument.
Or: Visit a home for the elderly and ask residents about their community memories and experiences.
Or: Visit the local library or historical society and find photos of what your community looked like 100 years ago, 50 years ago, 20 years ago, etc.

Time limit:
Group activity: 1 hour
Group discussion: 25 minutes

Discuss these questions:

- What happened during your visit? Did anything surprise you?
- What did you like about the visit? What would you have done differently?
- What did you learn about your community? Did it seem worthwhile? Why or why not?
- What's important to people about "ancestors" and knowing about the past?
- What causes people to have a respect for the past? Do you think it's rare or common in U.S. society for people to respect the past?
- What are other ways to find out about a community's identity?

23

Wrap-Up: Looking Back on Your Work

As a group, discuss these questions on *Step One: "Discovering Your Self-Interest"*.

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?

3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?

4. Were there other things about self-interest that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?

5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problems/tackling your team's project?

Step Two:

Stepping Into Public Life

In this section...

Entering public life is the only way to work on the things that matter to you. It's different from private life: you act differently and develop different parts of yourself there. This section introduces the skills of telling public life from private life and of tellingwhat you feel from what you think.

See glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to public life.

25

Aitken Comes to the Twin Cities

story and interview by Samara Smith

In May of 1990, groups of young people gathered in St. Paul, Minn. for a Public Achievement conference. One of these was a 4-H youth group from the rural Minnesota community of Aitken. They came to the conference with excitement at the expectation of learning new skills, but also with a bit of fear of the unexpected. They left with a new sense of what it is to engage in public life.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the experience was the opportunity to interact with a wide diversity of people. As one of the students, Ann Janzen, said, "It was really interesting for us to go to St. Paul and meet people with all of these different perspectives. We worked together great because we all had different experiences and were from different places and races. It was great to get everybody's input."

Some of the Aitken students had fears of seeming sheltered or naive compared to the city kids, but in discussing various problems important to the city students, they realized that they, too, had unique and important perspectives to share on the topics.

At the conference, students teamed up to work on problems common to all the young people such as racism, education, drug abuse, and the environment. Although the diversity of the students made it a challenge to work together and make decisions, the Aitken students felt that it deepened the experience. The racism group, for example, found ways to incorporate the diversity and negotiation into their final presentation. They made a banner which visually showed different parts fitting together like puzzle pieces.

At the end of the day, the different teams presented their projects to the other conference participants, adults, St. Paul Mayor Scheibel, and the media. Most agreed that while this experience was a bit scary, it made them feel their voice was important. They also worked hard before hand to "make their presentation understandable for people from different perspectives," said Ann. Angie Spears, another Aitken student, said, "I've changed a lot in seeing that everyone has a voice and we need to get the information all passed around."

Leaving the conference excited and empowered, the students made a commitment to carry their experience of public life and community problem solving into their home community. They decided to organize a conference to deal with similar issues in Aitken. Working diligently and strategically to put together the meeting, they pulled in many new students from their area. Tammy Ryan, a student who participated in both conferences, felt that the Public Achievement conference was good practice but said that their own meeting was more powerful because "that day we gained our power by applying it to our real lives."

"It's awesome to feel like you're part of something that's happening everywhere."
-Conference-goer 1989

26

Telling Public Life from Private Life

We all need to feel loved, and to feel as if we're part of a supportive network of friends. We meet these needs best in our private lives, where we can let down our guard and just be.

But in other settings we need to feel respected for what we can do and to be recognized for our accomplishments. We meet these needs best in our public lives, where we may actually enjoy the challenge of having to do something in order to gain appreciation and the chance to impress or influence others. The Aitken students found this out through their conference experiences and reflections.

It makes us sound schizophrenic. But actually, each of us needs a balance of both in order to be a whole person. It's important to understand the diffference between public life and private life and how to work in each arena.

One definition...

Public life is... where you become aware of hopes and concerns you share with others and where you act on them. It's where you learn the value of hearing many different viewpoints. It's where you are held accountable and get recognition for what you contribute (that includes places like school or a job.)

Public life should give you...
Dignity
Respect from others and from yourself
Practice in working with conflict and disagreement
A sense of accomplishment
The confidence to speak up for things that mean a lot to you
Influence and power
The feeling of being connected to others and to a wider world
A sense of self-discovery
Excitement
Drama

One definition...

Private life is...where you seek close relationships with family, friends, and other people who are like you. It's where you gain acceptance just for being yourself, and not so much what you contribute.

Private life should give you...
Unconditional love
Loyal friends
Intimacy and closeness
A set of values to live by
Self-esteem

Hey! Politics is community wherever you find it!

27

Citizen politics is the combination of public life with private values. Both become something bigger than what they started out as alone.

Remember the first time you realized that you were "in public"? Maybe you were waiting at the bus stop on your way to kindergarten with kids you didn't know. Or you were at the grocery store with your parents and suddenly realized that there are a lot more people in the world than your family and friends. Recognizing that you're in public life means realizing that you live alongside people who aren't part of your familiar world.

In this workbook, "Public life" means two things.

First, it is the place where an organized group (outside of your immediate family and friends) acts together to solve public problems.

Second, it is the way you act and the skills you need when you're working to solve these problems. We behave differently in public life than in private life because we want to accomplish different things in each arena. The chart below outlines some of these difference:

	Public Life	***Private Life***
setting	school, work	family, friends
description	open, diverse	closed, similar
what we give	accountability	loyalty
what we get	respect, power	love, self-esteem
how we act	strategic	spontaneous, intimate
skills we use	negotiation, judgment	accommodation, opinion

You are both a private person and a public person at the same time. It is important to understand which side of you to show when you are in different places. Can you think of times when private behavior slipped into public work? If this happens, it is harder and harder to work with the many different types of people and ideas necessary to public problem-solving.

Exercises

"Stepping Into Public Life"

Why School?
Public or Private People
What's in a Name?
Telling Ideas from Feelings

Why School?

This exercise asks you:
To recognize the public and private roles you have. Note that sometimes the borders are fuzzy between public and private life.

It relates to citizen politics because:
We have to understand the difference before we know what to expect and how to act in each setting.

Instructions:
1. List no less than 10 reasons why you go to school. If you run out of serious reasons, be goofy. Don't hesitate to put anything down. Keep going if you have lots and run out of room.

2. Write "public", "private", or "both" behind each reason to show which which part of your life—public or private—that reason fits into.

Time limit:
Individuals: 10 minutes
Group discussion: 10 minutes

Example: "Because I feel comfortable with my friends there." (private)

Example: "Because my teachers should see that I'm Trying" (public)

Public or Private People?

This exercise helps you:
To think about public vs. private situations when you're dealing with other people--often the most difficult situations to tell the two apart

It relates to citizen politics because:
Everyone's lives are different. Even though family is supposed to be a private place and work a public place, you may be a lot closer to a coworker than you are to your sister. It's important that you understand what you can expect from each relationship

Instructions:
List all the people you come into contact with: everybody and anybody, until you've run out of people or the lines below are filled.

Next, use definitions of public and private to decide what kind of relationship you have with each person.

Time limit:
Individuals: 15 minutes
Group discussion: 10 minutes

PERSON	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	BOTH	PERSON	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	BOTH

Were you surprised by any of your answers?

_____

Was it hard to decide sometimes? In which cases was it hardest?

_____

How often was your answer "both"?

_____

What's in a Name?

This exercise asks you:
To become more aware of how you respond to words and to how you use words.

It relates to citizen politics because:
Language is a public creature, but because each person has grown up with a different background, we sometimes can have different understandings of what words can mean. The way that people use language often reveals their opinions. Language choices can also influence listeners, and because of that, they can be very important.

Instructions:
As you read each of these pairs of statements, write down the different meanings they have and what impressions they give you. Think about how people with different backgrounds might react.

Time limit:
Individuals answer questions:	10 minutes
Group discuss	10 minutes

- *"Kids today don't know their place."*
  "Kids aren't sure how they fit into today's society."

- *"Curfews keep kids from roaming the streets after dark."*
  "Curfews limit kids' ability to move freely."

- *"You can't expect people to overcome their own racism, since it has become part of the culture."*
  "The fact that racist behavior is learned by people when they're young sometimes makes it hard for them to see."

Telling Ideas from Feelings

This exercise asks you:
To understand what's really being said by someone, and that can be more than just the words you hear.

It relates to citizen politics because:
It's important not to confuse what's important in your private life with your goals in public. If you are trying to argue for your ideas in public, your private feelings can often weaken, rather than strengthen, your chances convincing someone that your ideas are good. For that reason, it is sometimes important to be careful about how you act in public.

Instructions: Form groups of four people each. While two people discuss a controversial subject (like the ones in the previous exercise), the two others listen. One listener identifies the main arguments that are made, following the flow of logical thought. The other listener watches for "emotional" signals like body language, word choices, and other expressions of private opinion. Rotate roles after one "round", so that those who were listeners get to discuss, and those who discussed get to listen and report.

Time limit:

Group:	10 minutes for observation
	5 minutes for listeners to report
(Rotate roles)	
Group:	10 minutes for observation
	5 minutes for listeners to report

Answer questions as group: 10 minutes

- Do you think it's appropriate to try to separate ideas from feelings?

- Are there times when it's impossible to separate them?

- Are ideas always "public" and feelings always "private"?

Wrap-Up: Looking Back on Your Work

As a group, discuss these questions on *Step Two: "Stepping Into Public Life"*.

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?

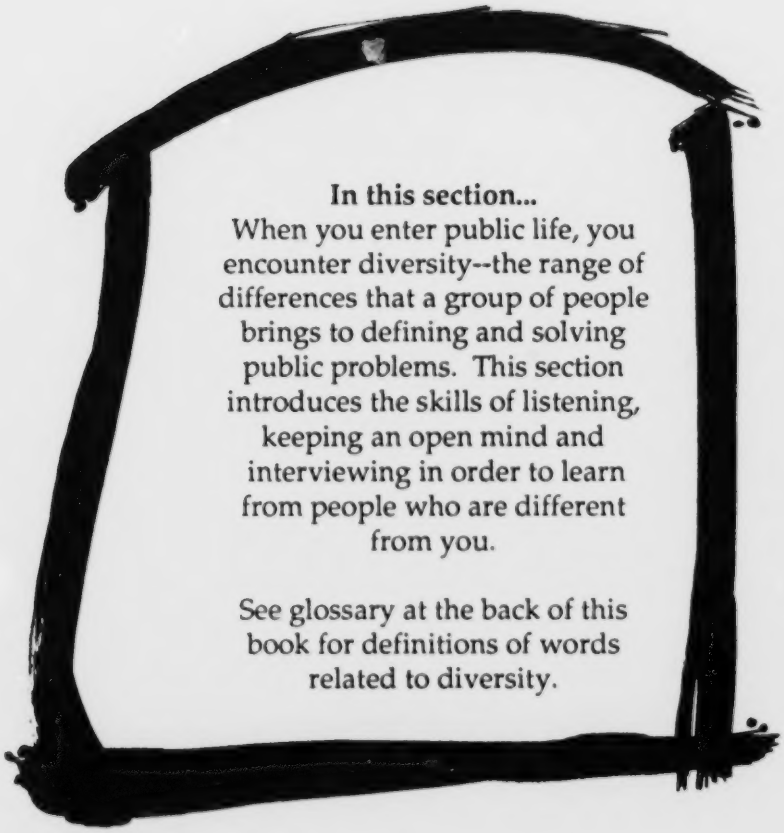
3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?

4. Where there other things about public life that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?

5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problems/tackling your team's project?

Step Three:

Encountering Diversity



In this section...
When you enter public life, you encounter diversity--the range of differences that a group of people brings to defining and solving public problems. This section introduces the skills of listening, keeping an open mind and interviewing in order to learn from people who are different from you.

See glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to diversity.

35

Using the Differences

Tiana Hampton-Newbauer is tired of hearing people say, "Young people can make a difference."

"Well, start letting them!" she says.

She's one of two young staffers of the Minneapolis Youth Organization, a program that has put a legion of the city's diverse young people to work as community resources. A group of teenagers led an AIDS-awareness discussion among fourth- and fifth-graders in Minneapolis schools, tapping into the perspectives of a gay among the group.

When the Minneapolis City Council was considering building a youth recreation center to address rising violence among young people hanging out downtown, MYO members started a petition in support of the idea. The front of a t-shirt hanging in the MYO office reads "I'm part of the downtown youth problem..." On the back it says, "...and its solution."

And when people call asking for one teen to give "a young person's point of view" at a conference or meeting, MYO sends a crowd. "We don't want to send a token kid, which is what they want," Tiana explains. "If we want to have a voice, we've got to send numbers." It's a reminder, too, that young people are too diverse for one to be representative of all.

Based in the Minneapolis mayor's office, MYO attracts young people from throughout the city and surrounding suburbs. Recruitment is by word of mouth, and other youth groups channel kids in. The program is staffed by two young people and an advisor, and they have plans to restructure MYO leadership to include even more youth.

MYO plans and sponsors events that help young people handle and make use of the diversity of the metro area. A "Unity Jam" featured speakers on prejudice and a dance party with many different styles of music. A weekend camp to discuss racial issues had a speaker on black history, a simulation of the Underground Railroad--and a big turnout of young blacks.

Tiana says that young people learn in situations where they're side by side, exchanging information about their lives. "You see how different you all are in how you grew up, in your expectations, in the kinds of knowledge you have. You recognize that everybody has different problems; divorce, for example... Schools just aren't places where you talk enough about who you are to do self-identification."

There's plenty of room for young people with ideas, she says. "Youth has become a big issue for people in political office. But this society needs to start using youth not for marketing, but to know what's going on. New roles are being found, and the potential is already there--we just need to realize it."

A big part of what MYO does is to help young people view themselves as part of the broad public diversity of the area. Young people are all different from one another, but they're also becoming more active participants in communities that have different genders, cultures, classes-- and ages--of people with things to offer.

Seeing Other People's Self-Interest

When was the first time you noticed you were different? Or, when was the first time you remember seeing different people? How did it feel to be different? Was it scary, hard, awkward, difficult?

Living a public life is about working with differences--different people, viewpoints and ideas. It can be difficult, but it can also be exciting and fun. Most important, the many differences that exist in public life can be a rich source of solutions to many of the complex problems we face.

If you try to solve problems by working only with people who are like you, it is a little like starting a band with four drummers–it limits the tunes you can play. Working with differences is like creating an entire orchestra that is versatile enough to play pop, jazz, classical or rap.

To act effectively in a public requires learning to listen and learning to see other people's self-interest. And it means learning that differences can give answers to some very difficult problems. When people discuss their ideas together and develop actions based on many points of view, they tap into a collective "wisdom" that is greater than any one person acting alone.

The Art of Listening

In a diverse society, the ones who can listen learn the most. Since we don't usually think of other people's perspectives automatically, skills of interviewing and of active listening are important.

People who listen well are seldom appreciated in this society. Television--that one-way street--is a strong force in the U.S., and value is placed on talking. The office secretary who takes the minutes at a meeting is not valued, yet whatever he or she reports afterward will be the official account of what happened. The best part about listening well is that nobody can have a monopoly over it: anyone can be an active listener by using these tips.

- Concentrate. Distinguish between ideas and feelings.
- Ask direct questions so the talker will tell you what is important to her.
- Ask WHY.
- Clarify what the talker said by restating what you heard.
- Summarize what you heard and check your summary with the talker.
- Report back to the group. There's no point in having a history if you can't learn from it.
- When reporting to the group, don't hesitate to report things you don't agree with or things that are negative. Report what IS. A good active listener steps back from criticizing.

POLITICS = RESPECT & not "respectability"!

Whoa!

Do you agree with this description of being in public?

Do you agree that diversity is a strength when problem-solving, or does it create more problems than it solves?

Does it treat "being able to work with differences" as a skill that's worth more than it really is?

37

If everyone is subject to change...
...why don't they?!

make a difference

HOW?

Life begins where discrimination ends!

Exercises

"Encountering Diversity"

Getting It Right
The Uncommon Denominator
Five Things You Are
When Diversity Hurts

Getting It Right

This exercise asks you:
To practice *really* listening. To discuss and disagree without getting to a personal or damaging level. Disagreements and conflicts are part of public life, and they must be worked on in a public way. Thus, we can disagree with another without personally affronting one another.

It relates to citizen politics because:
In public life, it's important to understand what's being said, even if it doesn't match your expectations. In the public arena, it is important to learn how to argue rather than quarrel. Learning to resolve conflicts in a public way comes from listening and working with the self interest of the speaker as well as yourself.

Instructions:
Get into groups of three. One person states her or his views on a controversial subject for about three minutes (some suggestions are below). The second person listens, then summarizes what was said. The third person evaluates the second person's listening skills to see how close the summary came to what the third person heard. Switch off so everyone in the group has a chance to play each role.

Time limit:
Small groups: 10 minutes per combination before rotating roles
Whole group: 10 minutes to discuss questions

EXAMPLES:
What do you think about mandatory community service for young people?
How do you feel about marriages between people under the age of 19?
How do you feel about capital punishment?
How do you feel about the equal rights movement?
How do you feel about the draft?
How do you feel about the age minimum for drinking and the age minimum for driving?
How should society deal with kids who deal drugs?

Questions for afterwards
Did conflicts come up between people's public and private views? How could you tell?

Did stories that people told from their own private experience give them more authority, or do you think they weakened people's arguments for what they believed?

Can someone who didn't actually put the ideas together say what "actually" got said? Or are people's individual interpretations the only possible thing that can come out of a summary?

The Un-Common Denominator

This exercise asks you:
To use inteviewing in order to find differences.

It relates to citizen politics because:
Interviewing is a great way to make sure you're listening--the key to identifying and using diversity. It is also an important skill for understanding why people you work with say and act as they do; it is an essential skill for finding out how and why someone's self interest has brought them to the public arena.

Instructions:
Pair up in a way that matches people who are as different as possible. If there are age or racial differences in the group, take advantage of these by mixing people around. If there are differences in academic concentration or political lean, mix these people up.

Interview each other and find as many differences as you can in how you view things. After all, it's only in relation to someone else that you can see how different *you* are. What music do you like? What makes you angry? What places would you like to visit? How do you spend your time? Where were you born? What is your favorite (and least favorite) subject at school?

Time limit:
In pairs: 20 minutes–10 minutes per person.

Some hints for interviewers:

- Avoid asking "yes or no" questions. Or if you ask them, follow them up with "Why?"

- Build on what your interviewee has already said. This involves paying attention to what's said. (And actually, an interviewee who feels "listened to" is likely to do a lot more talking than one who feels ignored.)

- Don't allow much empty time —ask questions to keep the conversation flowing. Your interviewee should at least be doing more talking than you, so resist the temptation to launch into long stories about yourself.

- This is a good exercise in finding out where public information ends and private information begins. Of course, it's different for everybody. If you ask a question that's too personal, your interviewee will probably let you know. Don't push it.

Five Things You Are

This exercise helps you:
Identify the diversity within yourself and imagine what others see when they look at you.

It relates to citizen politics because:
We use ourselves to compare others, so we rarely think of *ourselves* as being the ones who are different. This change of perspective is necessary if we plan to work together using diversity.

Instructions:
Answer the questions below individually. Then as a group, write the answers to Question 1 the board. Discuss the ways in which the answers vary and what they tell you about diversity. Answer Question 2.

Time limit:
Individuals answer questions: 10 minutes
Group discussion: 20 minutes

1. List five things (nouns) that describe who you are. Use single words only.
   (Examples: "soprano"; "Korean-American"; "athlete"; "Republican"; "brother")

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. How many of the things you listed above would be visible to someone who was meeting you for the first time?

_____
_____

What does that tell you about getting to know somebody? Can you "judge a book by its cover"?

_____
_____

When Diversity Hurts

This exercise asks you:
To speculate about why some people feel threatened by those who are different, and to explore your own views about diversity.

It relates to citizen politics because:
Not everyone understands the value of differences, and their fear can sometimes keep them from fully participating in public problem-solving. Seeing the world through their eyes will help you to communicate with them, educate them if possible, and eventually, to work with them better.

Instructions:
Answer the questions below and discuss your answers as a group. See if you can find out why people in your group feel as they do.

Time limit:
Individuals: 10 minutes
Group discuss: 15 minutes

The United States can be thought of as a kind of patchwork quilt because of all the different cultures that have migrated here and found a place for themselves in public life. As a country, we're proud of our reputation for diversity and *in theory*, we strive for it.

But *in practice*, the diversity of public life is tricky to manage. It's scary for many people, and they react to it in an emotional way. For example, many states with large non-English-speaking populations have created laws making English the official language. Usually that means that people's tax money won't be spent on things like bilingual roadsigns or bilingual education.

Why do you think the states are making laws supporting English? Do you agree with the states' decision?

_____

_____

Some other examples might be the stereotypes people in the North of the U.S. might have about people in the South, or the midwest about the west coast, and vice versa. Or the tensions between rural people and city people. Or among people of different cultural and racial group: European, African American, Latino, Chicans, Native American and Asian American.

Think back to your definitions of public and private, and what people get out of each. In all of these cases of bias, what do you think is the relationship between people's private needs and their public actions? What do you think of this idea: that people get frightened because they're mistaking public and private, and are afraid that they won't be accepted unconditionally, as they are at home with friends and family?

_____

_____

Make a list of times when you felt threatened by situations involving people who were different from you. How did you react? Would you still feel threatened--and react the same way--today?

_____

_____

Wrap-Up: Looking Back on Your Work

As a group, discuss these questions on *Step Three: "Encountering Diversity"*.

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?

3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?

4. Where there other things about diversity that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?

5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problems/tackling your team's project?

Step Four:

Building Power

In this section...
Power is the result of public life. Only by understanding your power and the power of others can you make the changes you want. This section introduces the skills of building collaborative power, planning, negotiating, and problem-solving.

See glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to power.

Skateboarding in Marshall

In the spring of 1988, Greg Baartman was in eighth grade in Marshall, Minnesota. He was also in detention again. Greg and school don't always get along very well, but that spring afternoon in detention gave Greg a chance to show the town of Marshall exactly what *is* important to him.

Greg is an avid skateboarder, or "skater". In Marshall, he's a leader in the sport, and has respect even among kids older than himself. So the topic of a "skatepark" was a natural choice for him when, in detention, he was assigned to write an essay about what would make Marshall a better place for youth.

The piece that Greg wrote was sent to to the city council and to the Parks and Recreation Community Education director, Justin Engels. It explained that skaters are often misunderstood and that more important, they're in need of an appropriate place to skate. "The idea some people have about us," he wrote, "is that we're bad people who find fun in stealing and vandalizing things. Well, it's not true. Skating is a way we express ourselves....The reason skaters have a bad reputation is because we don't speak out." He wrote about the problems that skaters have with cops and about new equipment that makes the sport safe. The need for a park for skaters was his main point, and he made it loud and clear.

The difference between Greg's letter and the others that were written in detention that day is that Greg actually sent his — and started a movement.

Not only did he get city councilmembers to sit up and take notice, but when the Community Education office put together a "youth council" in January of 1989, Greg got on it and brought his idea with him. He talked with that group of 7- through 12-graders, and also with other skaters. Soon there was talk of a skatepark in Marshall.

Now, Justin Engels reports, "there's a group of local, vocal kids of all ages that wants it." There are plans for a new 51-acre park, and now there's talk of making it accessible to skaters. Greg and others who agree with his idea have made a commitment to "hire themselves out" to work on events for local organizations like the Jaycees and Kiwanis and to volunteer in the parks. Money that would have been used to pay individuals instead goes into a kitty on behalf of the skatepark. They also keep up on grants awards.

Engels says that Greg has "learned to use power to finagle and bargain, but not in any deceptive way... now (the kids) know that you have to earn power and learn from the process of thinking through a plan."

The difference between his letter and the others written in detention that day is that he actually sent his-- and started a movement.

Getting familiar with Power

Often when people think of power, they think of the authority others have over them. Or they think of power as a substance that exists in limited amounts in the universe: "If someone else has power, there's less for me." Or they think of it as something they will grow into, a right that they will somehow automatically inherit with age.

As Greg Baartman found out when he sent his letter to City Hall, power simply means the ability to affect the things around you. The word "power" comes from the Latin word "poter", which means "to be able." It's a set of relationships between you (and your identity, which you identified in the first chapter) and other people (and their identities, which you practiced recognizing in the previous chapter). Having power means being able to act on the things you care about. And *that* means a lot of things:

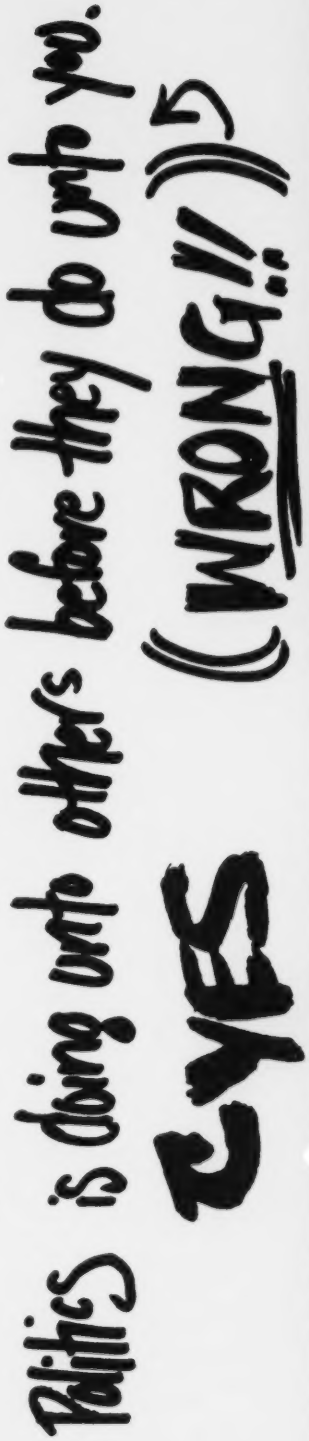
- It means that there are strong emotions associated with power.
- It means that power is a two-way street, so you have control over part of it and that part of it can be changed.
- It also means that *other* people also control part of your relationship with them, and they may not agree with your ideas for changing the relation ship. Confrontation is always a possibility when you're seeking change.
- And finally, it means that there is not a fixed amount of power. Accom plishing what you care about might *not* be in conflict with what other people care about; in fact, when it's possible, common action is the most effective way of doing things.

Power--relationships among people--generate strong emotions. But not all emotions are useful for getting what you need out of a relationship, and some are very damaging. For example, there's a difference between anger and rage. Both are strong ways to express your will to change a relationship, but anger means channeling your emotion, and rage means losing control. Losing control is one way of giving up your share of the power in a relationship.

Another way to give up your share of the power is to wait for permission to change something that you believe needs to be changed. Sometimes you never get permission, and it would be a long wait before you get what you want by politely waiting. It's when you stop waiting that you risk conflict. This potential for hard times is why it's important to really believe in the changes you want to make.

Getting acquainted with power doesn't necessarily produce conflict and confrontation, however. There is great power in identifying win-win situations in which both sides get somwthing important out of the relationship. Opportunities for meaningful compromise are why there's not a finite amount of power in the universe. And practicing power--acting on the things you care about–is what public life is all about.

You've heard the expression, "there is strength in numbers." If you can figure out where your interests overlap with those of others who want change, you have "collective power." You can create a common agenda and pool your skills with others' to change things.



Advice on Building Collaborative Power

Stabilize a home team.

If you have an idea for change that's worth working for, the first step toward making it happen is to create a working group around the issue. Surround yourself with those who will be most supportive and draw inspiration from them. It doesn't have to be a big group, and it doesn't have to be your closest friends. Talk with them about your idea and work through the details. Agree on fundamentals--like how large a project you're ready to take on. (If necessary, revise your ambitions and break up big challenges into smaller ones.) Be a team before you go out. The first step to having power is to be a player; not an outsider.

Identify allies

Common ground is the key to expanding your team's base of support. Networking among communities is the best way to garner power, and finding "friends in high places" who agree with you can be very useful. Sometimes it's possible to draw out common ground where it appeared there was none: this eliminates adversaries, instead of just identifying them.

Not everyone is good material for an ally. If the change you want to make is an important one, you'll encounter pressure and possibly some harsh treatment. When the stakes go up, niceness can get left behind. The rules may be different from those in calm times.

Building power means not thinking in moral terms like, "it's all unfair to me." Rather, it is important to see the world as it is and to develop a practical reaction to what you see.

The question is ultimately one of identifying and using your own power in relation to other people's power. Understanding relational power in politics lets people who may not be friends work together to solve public problems. Building power over time is about building and maintaining on-going relationships with people in useful positions.

Make a plan of action

Define your goals. Start out by deciding how you'll define success. Allow yourselves enough time to "do your homework" --thorough research of the problem is important. Decide on role of adults and on the nature of help you may need. Think about timing; recognize that progress will probably come slowly. Know when to stop. Build in a method for reflecting after each step.

Take risks. Don't wait for permission. Don't give up--it takes work!

WITHOUT POWER-- THERE IS NO SELF-RESPECT!

no- without self-respect there's no real power!

Teaching New"Rules" in School

Quick! Name a few places where you have power.

Chances are, school is not at the top of your list. Most schools make it a point *not* to cultivate young people's power. There is a Minneapolis teacher, however, who believes that teaching young people the skills "to be able" would help solve many of humanity's problems.

Meet Cecil Ramnaraine. He teaches Social Studies to senior-high students at South High School, and his most popular class is Peace Studies. It's subject matter is unusual: rather than the standard menu of U.S. and European wars, Ramnaraine's class teaches about ethics, prejudice, and the causes and costs of violence among humans.

But what makes the class really powerful is the way it is taught. It breaks all the rules for a "successful" classroom atmosphere. Students are encouraged to think for themselves and to disagree with the teacher. Self-knowledge--students' own background--is the basis for figuring out what their values are. They are expected to exercise self-discipline and are responsible for the trust placed in them. They must learn to interact with one another, in all their diversity and disagreement. Most important, they become motivated by themselves, without the threat of being expelled or flunked.

Ramnaraine's rules for the class period are 1) no screaming and 2) no cussing: these are signs that students are "losing their cool," says Ramnaraine. Beyond those rules, students are expected to behave according to "basic human respect for one another." They have to figure out what that is, and most do.

The class disciplines itself. Ramnaraine sees other classes all around trying to "control human behavior" and making "obedient consumers" out of his students. During a meditation during each class — designed to help students better know themselves--disruptive students get pressure from the other kids in the class to straighten up.

There are no tests. Students grade themselves. "It's a question of trust," Ramnaraine explains. "The kids know I trust them. Sure, some fudge a little. But they take it seriously and are basically honest. I am telling them, 'I respect you,' and if they hear it enough they begin to believe in themselves."

Students also must do community service — what Ramnaraine calls "practicing your peace, not just talking it." They learn firsthand about the consequences of drugs by volunteering in shelters, for example. They learn about sacrifice by giving up their time and understand the rewards they gain from direct action.

Students can't avoid interacting. One white young man told him, "I pass black people in the halls everyday, but I never actually talked to one until this class."

Even those who disagree with Ramnaraine's opinions admit that they learn a lot --not the least of which is how to "agree to disagree". He says that two young Army recruits--seniors who were entering the military when they graduated-- took his class and were surprised at the depth and fairness of the discussions. They didn't change their minds, Ramnaraine says, but at least "they know now that not everybody in the world agrees with them."

The power "to be able" must be learned. Exercising and practicing self-discipline, respect, argument, debate is difficult, but worth it. Through experiences like those in Ramnaraine's classroom, students can and will gain the power to make their world a better place.

Think about the kind of world you want to live & work in. What do you need to build that world? Demand that your teachers teach you that.
— Peter Kropotkin

Exercises "Building Power"

Is School A Separate World?
The Seventy-Five Cents Solution
Mapping Power

Is School a Separate World?

This exercise asks you:
To think about your own school and the power you can build within it.

It relates to citizen politics because:
Finding ways to build power in the places where we work and learn is a crucial step to making changes in those institutions that are important to us.

Instructions:
Think about your school and answer the questions below

Time limit:
Individuals: 10 minutes
Group discussion: 20 minutes

In your opinion, what about school makes it a place where kids can feel powerful? In what ways can it make them feel powerless?

_____

_____

_____

Do you have power in your life? If you do, where does it come from?

_____

_____

_____

The Seventy-Five Cents Solution

This exercise asks you:
To practice the important "public arts" of negotiation, conflict resolution, making a decision, and active listening.

It relates to citizen politics because:
The important ideas of citizen politics won't change things unless we use the skills that go along with them.

Instructions:
1. Divide into groups of three. Agree on a time limit for the exercise.

2. All three people in each group must give up a quarter, so that every group has a kitty of 75 cents.

3. Select one of the three to be The Observer. This person's job is simply to pay close attention to what happens next.

4. The remaining two players must figure out what do with the kitty before their time is up. The Observer should be watching the time limit and let the other two know when they only have two minutes left.

5. When time is up, come back together as a full group. Have all the Observers answer these questions:

    - What solution did the two "deciders" in the group find?
    - Were both "deciders" equally happy with the solution?
    - What kinds of arguments worked best? Did the idea of "justice" change during the discus sion?
    - How important were individual personalities?

6. Have everyone answer these questions:

    - What was the hardest part about figuring out what to do with the quarters? What concerns seemed most important?
    - How important was it that both "deciders" agree on the solution?
    - Did the Observers help make decisions? What differences did it make to have the Observers there at all?
    - Where are the quarters now? Will they stay there?

Mapping Power

adapted from Diagramming Your Organization

This exercise asks you:

To draw a map of how people have influence in the organization or group you currently work with *or* that you need to work with.

It relates to citizen politics because:

Understanding who holds what power where and what type of power they have will help determine the type of action you can take. Understanding where someone's power lies is useful to figuring out how to bring them into your work.

Instructions:

On a piece of newsprint, working in pairs, draw a diagram of how you think people in your organization (or in an organization that is important for your work) have power. When you've finished, hang it on the wall and be ready to discuss the different drawings with the entire group. Think carefully about all the ways people might influence one another both formally and informally.

Topics for discussion:

- What type of power does the person you want to work with have in the organization?
- How can you reach that power?
- Does the organization work well the way the power is structured?
- What do you notice about the informal power relationships?

Time limit:

In pairs:	20 minutes
Group discusion:	20 minutes

Tips

A few brief definitions of ways power can work in different structures:

- **Formal hierarchy**—the amount of power and influence increases as one movers closer to the top of the structure.
- **Informal influences**—based on close, personal ties with people high up in a structure (ie if some people have worked together for many years, if some people go to the same church, if some people are related.
- **Participatory groups**—suggest that everyone has an equal say in decisions that are made; informal influence often is important to map in these situations.
- **Concensus structures**—some groups have no official leader, rather people have influence based on their own expertise around a certain situation. Thus, the power can rotate depending upon the situation.

Wrap-Up: Looking Back on Your Work

As a group, discuss these questions on *Step Four "Building Power"*.

1. What did you learn?
2. What did you like about this section? What didn't you like?
3. What was useful about the section? What wasn't?
4. Where there other things about power that you discovered that weren't covered in this book?
5. What did you learn that you could use in solving problems/tackling your team's project?

Step Five:

Go For It!

In this section...
Go for it! means jumping in and tackling a real, live issue. This section is yours to create.

See glossary at the back of this book for definitions of words related to practicing citizen politics.

Citizen Politics

(the Big Picture of how it all fits together)

Do-It-Yourself Politics

Chances are good that when you were a kid, you were told not to touch stovetops because they're hot. Chances are just as good that you understood the message a lot better after you got burned once or twice. There's just no substitute for learning firsthand.

When you learn from experience, you learn both about the outside world and about who you are. Going back to the scarred hands example, not only did you learn that stoves can be dangerous, but you learned under what circumstances you *in particular* might get burned. Not only did you learn that people undergo pain when they get burned, but you learned how you *in particular* react to pain.

Stepping into public life is a lot like stepping onto a basketball court. There's pressure, and you might feel as if there's a lot that depends on what you do. Yet it's only with practice that you can become good at setting up strategies with your teammates even as the game is going on all around you--there's no substitute for the real thing. In an intense game, you also come to appreciate how much power there is in coordinating your actions with the rest of the team's. You get used to it, and you get better at predicting what your actions will accomplish.

After a game, a team usually analyzes its own actions and those of its opponents, either formally or informally. It's a way of translating the experience of the past two hours into future games, and it's the reason a team that has played together before isn't starting from scratch and gets better and better. The same is true of public life: *reflection* means drawing conclusions about actions and events. It can involve personalizing situations by examining what you believe about them, or it may mean evaluating something publicly with other people. It's active remembering with a purpose. It's a political act because it takes the mystery out of the power and the knowledge that other people have, and it boils power back down to relationships.

You saw in *Self-Interest* how knowledge of what you believe leads you to public life. You saw in *Public* and *Diversity* how much you learn when you encounter other people and what they believe, and how they have ideas that are sometimes either in conflict or agreement with yours. And you saw in *Power* that it's when you start acting on what you want that you have to manage your relationships with others and figure out how to work effectively with a diversity of ideas values and people to get the job done.

What you learn along each step of public life brings you full circle. Participating in public life changes you. By developing skills that can help you look back and see how far you've come, you can develop a sense of ownership over your own knowledge. You can discover the dignity of knowing your own story well enough to keep telling it, revising it and clarifying it.

Hang on a sec!

Does this description match what you've read in the rest of this workbook?

Do you agree that thinking about what you've done is as important as this article seems to think it is?

JUST ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL...
- PINK FLOYD

What should we build?

Your Story

Now it's up to you. Organize a team. Identify an issue that is important to the group and define a problem that you would like to solve. Who are the players? What do you need to do? When do you need to do it? How will you get it done? What happened? Why? Write us and let us know!

Resources

In this section...

A. A song
B. For Coaches
C. Reporter's Role
D. Evaluation
E. Glossary
F. More

Resource A

IT'S A GREAT SONG - BECAUSE IT'S TRUE -LARRY LONG

Fighting For Our Lives

words: Larry Long/Youth & Democracy Participants
music: Larry Long
copyright Larry Long Publishing 1990/BMI
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Notation courtesy of Becky Post

Fighting for Our Lives was collectively written with participants at the Youth & Democracy Conference, April 1989. The chorus was written by the entire body of partipants. The verses were selectively written by students representing different cultural regions of Minnesota; small town, family afarms, suburbs, and inner city. The entire collective writing took one full day. The song was hotly debated by all, until a consensus was reached. If there was a division on any given line, a vote was taken and teh decision was made. We hope you enjoy the song as much as we did writing it. A song is truly not a song, until it is given away. Enjoy.

— Larry Long

Fighting For Our Lives

Down the streets of broken houses
Kids grow old before their time
The sirens are screaming
Between your house and mine
And there's a little baby crying
Papa's not at home
Mama's on the street
Left baby all alone

Chorus:
It's our thoughts
It's our future
Our voices and our lives
We are young
But we're not children
We're fighting for our lives

In the small towns of the country
You can hear the tires squeal
To the malls in the suburbs
Where the streets are getting filled
With the farmers' money
There's something going down
All the stores on Main Street
Are falling to the ground

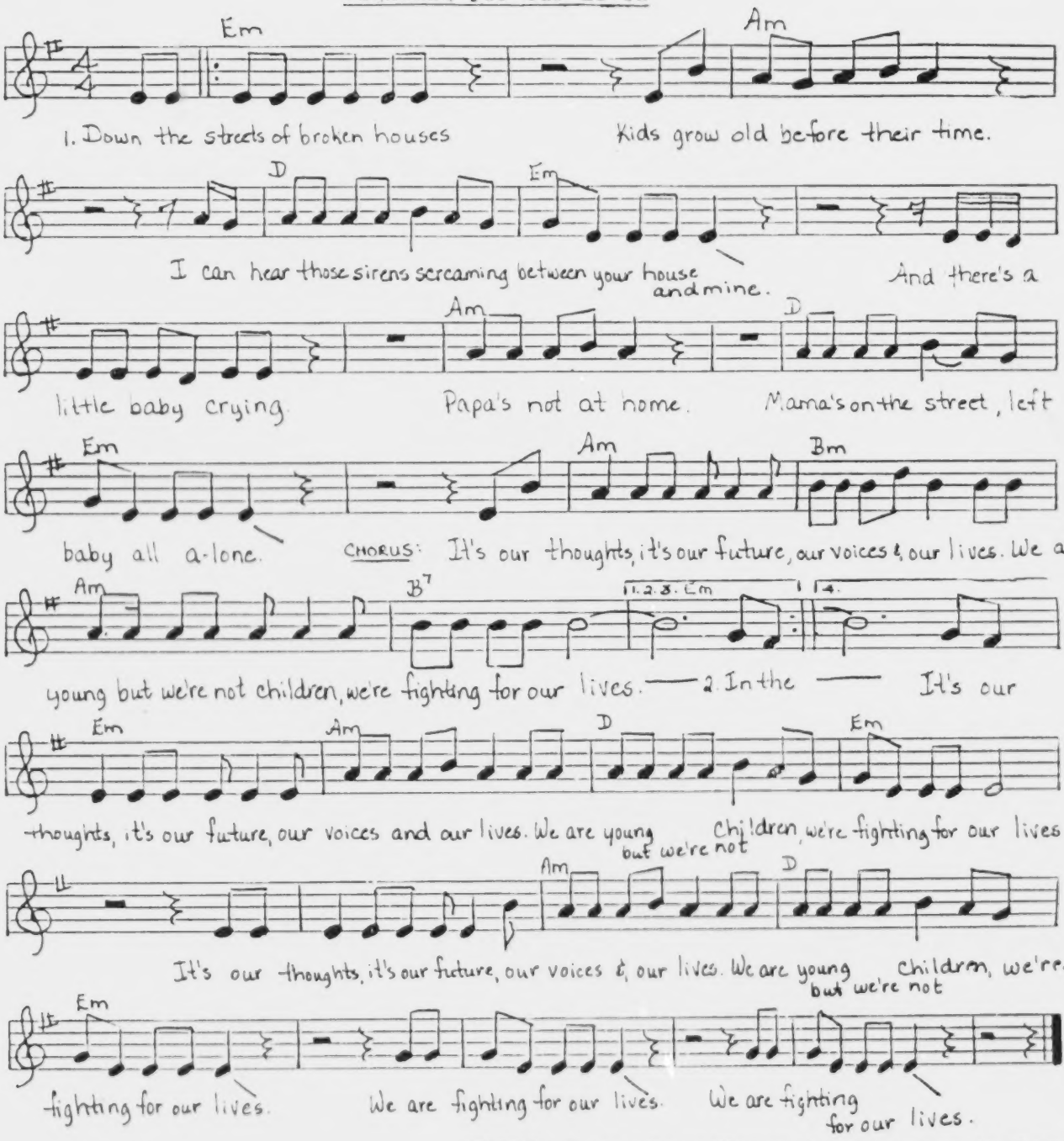
In the suburbs of the city
Streets are quiet and still
Farmland turning into houses
Tearing down the hills
Making more room for buildings
There's trouble around the bend
Where did it start?
Where will it end?

From Laos into Thailand
Across the Mekong
River we came swimming
Through the night into the dawn
Now we miss our country
Now we miss our friends
How can we go back
When the killing never ends?

If I want to go to college
And get a degree
But I got no money
Into the infantry
Off to Guatamala,
El Salvador,
Mexico, Saudi Arabia —
Into a brutal war.

Treaties have been broken
Promises forgot
It's time to make a change
It will take a little thought
It will take a little action
It will take a little time
It will take a lot of people
To get this world into its prime

We're the next generation
Make sure we're not the last
Look forward to the future
But don't forget our past
We will make the difference
We know the fight is long
With our hope and our unity
Together we are strong...

Fighting For Our Lifes

Em
Am
1. Down the streets of broken houses
Kids grow old before their time.
D
Em
I can hear those sirens screaming between your house and mine.
And there's a
Am
D
little baby crying.
Papa's not at home.
Mama's on the street, left
Em
Am
Bm
baby all a-lone.
CHORUS: It's our thoughts, it's our future, our voices & our lives. We are
Am
B7
1.2.3. Em
4.
young but we're not children, we're fighting for our lives. — 2. In the — It's our
Em
Am
D
Em
thoughts, it's our future, our voices and our lives. We are young but we're not Children, we're fighting for our lives.
Am
D
It's our thoughts, it's our future, our voices & our lives. We are young but we're not Children, we're.
Em
fighting for our lives.
We are fighting for our lives.
We are fighting for our lives.

WORDS: Larry Long/Youth & Democracy Conference
MUSIC: Larry Long
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*If I want to go to college & get a degree
But if I got no money, into the infantry
Off to Guatemala, El Salvador
Mexico, Saudi Arabia, into another brutal war

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Resource B
Guidelines for Coaches

Most groups will have a coach. This works well as long as the coach is paying attention to his/her role. Authority within groups must be delicately balanced, and it's the job of everybody in the group to make sure that the coach is doing what's expected--and no more. One interesting experiment might be to trade off the leadership role every session, or from exercise to exercise.

Every chapter contains a section called *Wrap -Up*--use it to recap each chapter.

The group should go through the guidelines below so that everybody knows what to watch for.

Go ahead and add to the list.

Coaches
- explain exercises and clarify concepts when asked to
- ask plenty of questions (especially "Why?")
- encourage many viewpoints
- encourage discussions even if they seem headed for conflict

Ground Rules for Discussion
- make sure everyone's view is heard
- keep the conversation on track and insist on time limits
- participate
- listen
- respect others
- encourage the group to make up its own Group Exercises, or use and change the ones here.
- evaluate often. Is the group accomplishing what it wants to? Is it taking too long to get the job done? Why? What works? What doesn't?

What else? Now you add some...
-
-
-

Resource C
Using a Reporter

Taking stock is important for anybody who's doing something with a purpose. For every discussion or exercise, assign a "Reporter" from within the group (someone who takes notes on what's happening and can report back at the end of the session). That person's comments will become a public document, a sort of "memory" for the group.

This will help the group figure out what just happened. It also makes each person responsible for what he/she says. If the Reporter uses a tape recorder, he/she can listen to it later for making notes. Tape-recording is also useful if the group wants to replay the discussion for clarification.

A new description of listening is given in the chapter on*Encountering Diversity*. Here are some general guidelines for Reporters to start with:

- Listen carefully and write down those things that are said or done that you think are important.
- Whenever someone says something you don't understand, ask questions and repeat what you think you heard.
- Try to draw conclusions about and summarize what got said. Check it out with the person who said it to make sure you're on the right track.
- Report to the group what just happened.
- Switch around so that other people can be reporters.

Resource D

Tips For Evaluation

Evaluation is an important part of a life of effective public action. It requires that you think about the strategies you've used, about what you've learned from each action, and begin planning for what to do next.

Evaluation is most useful when it is purposeful and built into each part of your work.

Evaluation is the art of asking direct and relevant questions. You might want to amend the framework provided below depending on what type of action you are evaluating and depending on what you want to learn from each part of the organizing process.

In general, these questions may be used to evaluate any action, meeting, or step in your plan:

- **how do you feel** about the action, meeting or step?
- **what worked well** about the action, meeting or step?
- **what didn't work well** about the action, meeting or step?
- **what have we learned** from the action, meeting or step?
- **what can we do differently next time** for future actions, meetings, or steps?

Resource E
Glossary

The language we use is important; it serves as a map or guide for effective public action. Below is a quick resource list of the ideas and skills central to our work. Compare these definitions to what you came up with earlier in the guidebook.

Public Concepts (the ideas that define the way we work)

Diversity
The differences of ideas, opinions, histories, and cultures that exist among any people. Using these differences to solve problems is essential to citizen politics.

Power
"To be able." The set of relationships we all have to one another in citizen politics; these relationships can be harnessed to give us collaborative power.

Public
An organized group (outside of your immediate family and friends) acting together to solve shared problems. We act differently in public life than in private life because we want to accomplish different things, for example:

	Public Life	*Private Life*
setting	school, work	family, friends
description	open, diverse	closed, similar
what we give	accountability	loyalty
what we get	respect, power	love, self-esteem
how we act	strategic	spontaneous, intimate
skills we use	negotiation, judgment	accommodation, opinion

Public Wisdom
The community's memory of how everyone's actions combined to make a difference over time. Using diversity to solve public problems over time creates public wisdom.

Self-Interest
What is important to you and motivates you. Self-interest determines what you're willing to act on.

Public Arts (the skills we must learn and use in order to make a difference)

Accountability
Following through with an action you planned to do. Being responsible for watching the results of the action.

Active Listening
The work that is required to understand others' self-interests. Requires recognizing your own self-interest — and not letting it get in the way of hearing a different perspective.

Disciplined Anger
Harnessing our frustration in a way that helps solve problems. Allows us to work with those we disagree with or who we may not like.

Evaluation
Examining what worked, what could have worked better, and how you felt about a public meeting, action or event.

Imagination
The resourcefulness and open-mindedness to invent different ways of solving public issues. In order to change what isn't working, one must be able to envision another way of doing it.

Interviewing
Asking probing questions to learn about others' self-interests.

Negotiation
Finding solutions that everybody can live with, by: expressing your self-interest; discovering other people's; discussing the problem; and debating suggested solutions.

Power analysis
Figuring out who holds the power on a particular issue, why, and what your team can do about it.

Public Judgment
A consensus opinion about a situation or issue, which is created after debate, discussion, imagination. Opens the door for many different solutions to any one problem.

Storytelling
Using your past and your experiences to explain to others why you believe what you believe and to describe what is important toyou.

Strategic Planning
Creating a workplan to help frame the team's action.

Suspending Pre-judgment
Not allowing your own self-interest to affect what you hear when others are describing their self-interests.

Resource F

When You've Run Out of Pages: More Avenues to Explore

What follows is a list of resources we found useful—the organizations have networks and publications that you may choose to use. This list is just a beginning. What types of organizations do you need to use? What other types of resources are important for your community work? Add them to this list...

Organizations

4-H
340 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55057
612/625-9700

4-H is a national youth organization. They have extensive training and program materials for young people of all ages.

Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL)
386 McNeal Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55057
612/624-3018

COOL is a national network of campus community service organizations. It is directed and run by young people. Resources available from COOL include: books, newsletter, speakers, conferences.

Humphrey Forum
Humphrey Center
301-19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612/624-5799

The Humphrey Forum is a vibrant exhibit of 20th century government, politics and history. The Forum's teaching program has sessions for elementary and junior and senior high school students. Call the Forum to reserve time for your class to visit. Other resources include archives and a newsletter.

Institute for the Arts of Democracy
Building Citizen Democracy
145 Ninth Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415/864-8555

Building Citizen Democracy is the action program of the Institute for the Arts of Democracy. It has discussion tools, speakers, and other educational resources.

Key of See
2615 South 6th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55454
612/333-0970

The Key of See has extraordinary tips and and ideas for how-to-tell stories. They have resources for students and teachers.

Mississippi River Revival
1624 Harmon Place
Suite 208
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612/339-4142

The Mississippi River Revival is a multicultural environmental organization striving to protect the Mississippi River, all the way from its headwaters to the gulf. Resources include programming ideas, newsletter, resource booklets, riverwatch program.

National Youth Leadership Council
1910 W. County Road B
Roseville, MN 55113
612/631-3672

This national organization specializes in youth leadership and community service. Resources include leadership training retreats, speakers, newsletter and other publications.

Public Achievement
c/o Project Public Life
Humphrey Center
301-19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612/625-0142

Public Achievement is a pilot project of Project Public Life designed to engage teenagers in public problem-solving work. Resources from Project Public Life and Public Achievement include: *Making the Rules*, articles, discussions guides, conferences, speakers, a network of teams working on local projects.

University of Minnesota YMCA
1901 University Avenue SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414
612/625-3800

The University Y's mission includes ethical leadership, personal reflection, and community service. Resources include experiential learning models, leadership training, publications and organizing how-to's.

Performers

Larry Long

Red Tail Hawk Productions
Box 9601
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440
(612) 871-0885

Larry performs internationally in concert and conducts collective songwriting workshops thorughout the United States. He has released four albums on Flying Fish Records, including 'It Takes A Lot Of People' which was nominated to the 'Academy' for a Grammy in 1989. One part hobo, one part wandering organizer and teacher, Larry Long is a classic American folk figure.

'Fighting For Our Lives' is included on Larry Long's newly released album on Flying Fish Records. Contact Red Tail Hawk Productions for more information regarding collective songwriting and recordings.

Other

- Folktales and stories from different cultures
- The local library
- The state Historical Society
- The phone book
- City Hall

Comments

We want to hear how you've used this book; what worked; what didn't; and what suggestions you have for updating future editions. Please use the space below to jot down your ideas and send it to us. Thanks.

Project Public Life • Humphrey Center • 301 19th Avenue South • Minneapolis, MN 55455

For more copies of *Making the Rules*, please fill out the form below and mail to Project Public Life:

name:

organization:

street address:

city, state, zip code:

phone number:

please rush me _____ copies of *Making the Rules* at $6.50/copy (includes tax, postage and handling).

total enclosed $ _____

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